United Nations E/ICEF/1999/P/L.23

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
6 July 1999

Original: English

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 1999
7–10 September 1999
Item 9 of the provisional agenda*

For action

Recommendation for funding for a short-duration country programme**

Colombia

Summary

The present document contains a recommendation for funding from general resources and supplementary funds for the country programme of Colombia with duration of two years to support activities that will lead to the preparation of a full-length country programme. The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board approve the amount of $1,666,000 from general resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $4,000,000 in supplementary funds, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2000 to 2001.

* E/ICEF/1999/15.

** The figures provided in the present document are final and take into account unspent balances of programme cooperation at the end of 1998. They will be contained in the "Summary of 1999 recommendations for general resources and supplementary funding programmes" (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.16).

99-20213 (E) 260799

Basic data

(1997 unless otherwise stated)

Child population (millions, under 18 years)	16.0
U5MR (per 1,000 live births)	30
IMR (per 1,000 live births)	25
Underweight (% net moderate and severe) (1995)	8
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births) (1994)	80 (80)[a]
Literacy (% male/female) (1995)	91/90
Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female) (1995)	90/91[b]
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%) (1994)	58
Access to safe water (%) (1995)	85
Routine EPI vaccines financed by Government (%)	100
GNP per capita (US$)	2 280
One-year-olds fully immunized against:	
tuberculosis	98 per cent
diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus	84 per cent
measles	76 per cent
poliomyelitis	85 per cent
Pregnant women immunized against tetanus (1995)	57 per cent

[a] MMR adjusted figure for misclassification and under-reporting.

[b] Net primary school attendance.

The situation of children and women

1. In 1998, 2,216 kidnappings were reported in Colombia, 30 per cent more than in 1997, with the guerrillas responsible for 70 per cent of them. Military activities perpetrated by the guerrilla occurred in 700 of the country's 1,073 municipalities. In many of these municipalities, the guerrillas — about 15,000 men and women strong — supplant the state authorities and institutions. In 1998, 112 massacres were recorded in the country in which 667 people lost their lives, 573 were victims of paramilitary forces, estimated to be 6,000 men strong. From 1990 to 1998, 30,000 people have died violent deaths annually. During these eight years, over 1,300,000 persons, 70 per cent of them children and women, have been displaced by violence. International human rights organizations have characterized this pattern as widespread, systematic and gross violations of human rights. The inefficiency of civil justice stands out because of the judicial backlog, intimidation and the climate of impunity that exists in the country, as only 3 per cent of crimes are resolved successfully.

2. A report published in February 1999 by Counselling for Human Rights and Displaced People, a UNICEF-supported non-governmental organization (NGO), shows the seriously deteriorating situation in the country in terms of internally displaced populations. Roughly 89,000 people were displaced due to the armed conflict in 1995; and there were 181,000 in 1996; 257,000 in 1997; and 308,000 in 1998. Most displaced people move to marginal areas of Colombian cities. NGO staff working with displaced populations, minorities or in defence of human rights have been threatened, kidnapped or even killed by paramilitary or guerrilla forces. Approximately 30 per cent of the population live in areas of difficult access due to armed conflict, which constrains achievement of the objectives of the National Plan of Action (NPA) for children.

3. Colombia's economic growth rate has averaged 4.4 per cent for the past 40 years, but has recently experienced a drastic fall to 0.2 per cent in 1998. This signals long-standing economic problems: the inflation rate was estimated at 18.5 per cent; unemployment reached 19 per cent in the last trimester of 1998; and there is a large government deficit. In 1999, the Government declared an economic emergency. The proportion of the population living below the poverty line is 55 per cent (1996), which amounts to 18 million people, 6.5 million of them children. While poverty is growing in urban fringes, in rural areas it seriously affects the indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations.

4. The violation of children's rights is widespread and is not only attributed to the armed conflict. The births of almost 4.5 million children have not been registered. An estimated 2 million boys and girls are abused each year. Approximately 148 cases of intra-family violence per 1,000 people currently occur. In 1998, the Institute of Forensic Medicine in Santafé de Bogotá assessed 18,800 cases of physical abuse in children, one half of which involved cases of sexual abuse. Some 1.7 million children between 12 to 17 years old work, only 10 per cent of whom are covered by social security, and about 25 per cent of them are involved in risky occupations. Seventy per cent of working children do not attend school. The Colombian Institute of Family Welfare estimates that 30,000 children, most of them boys, live on the streets of major cities, and 75 per cent suffer from some form of substance abuse (alcohol, drugs, cigarettes). Most leave home to escape abuse and family violence. The majority drop out of school and never return. An estimated 30,000 adolescents are currently subject to judicial proceedings for legal offences committed.

5. Many of the World Summit for Children goals have been achieved, with the exception of maternal mortality, water, sanitation, under-weight prevalence, exclusive breastfeeding and education. The national infant mortality rate is estimated at 25 per 1,000 life births; for children in the poorest regions, the rate is 76 per 1,000 live births. The main causes of death are perinatal complications, pneumonia and acute diarrhoea. Since 1997, all flour produced locally has been fortified with iron, folic acid and B vitamins. In 1998, Colombia was certified as free of iodine deficiency disorders. The maternal mortality rate is 80 per 100,000 live births, although in some regions it reaches 130 per 100,000 live births. Abortion is the third most significant cause of maternal mortality. In 1998, over 20 per cent of women below the age of 19 years were pregnant or already mothers. Exclusive breastfeeding is practised by only 11 per cent of mothers for the first six months of their infants' lives.

6. While Colombia has no gender disparities regarding access to the educational system, the latter does require substantial qualitative improvement. Of every 100 children entering primary school, 58 complete grade 5, but only 40 do so in five years and only 30 complete the basic education cycle (grade 9). The national illiteracy rate is 11 per cent, but in rural areas, estimates range from 24 to 30 per cent. Approximately 2.7 million children between 14 and 17 years old do not attend school.

Programme cooperation 1993–1999

7. The country programme for 1993–1999 aimed to position children's problems as a main concern for both the State and civil society, and thus develop a culture in favour of children based on respect of their rights to survival, development, protection and participation. UNICEF cooperation contributed to the formulation of policies and programmes that promote special attention for children, youth and women oriented to achieve the commitments of the World Summit for Children as expressed in the NPA.

8. As part of the Management Excellence Programme, the organizational capacity of the country office was strengthened through team-building and joint responsibility for producing results in an environment that emphasized continued learning. The resulting improvement in the quality of UNICEF technical assistance served as a model for capacity-building of national counterparts. Two main changes were introduced in the country programme: (a) the emergence of support to the priorities of children in armed conflict as a critical programme component which then became the springboard for involvement in the peace initiative and support for families displaced by violence; and (b) the reorientation of the existing basic services programme from the provision of basic services to local development, with the following three components: (i) strengthening local management of service delivery; (ii) strengthening community participation; and (iii) generation of experiences from 24 pilot municipalities to serve as inputs to national policy development and the decentralization process.

9. The mid-term review (MTR) conducted in October 1996 analysed the progress of the country programme and the relevance of its programme mix to the current needs of the country. It suggested concrete programmatic lines of action to cover the remaining period of cooperation. In general, the review noted that: (a) a considerable number of the goals of the World Summit for Children have been achieved or are being vigorously pursued, while pinpointing the need for increased efforts to achieve the maternal mortality reduction, and water and sanitation goals; and (b) progress was made in the mobilization of the Government and civil society for children's rights, the participation of children and gender mainstreaming. Following the MTR, the country programme was restructured to respond to the current conditions of the country and became less sectoral and more integrated, with a smaller number of programmes and projects but a more comprehensive intersectoral profile.

10. During 1996, UNICEF successfully supported the Children's Peace Movement when 2.7 million Colombian children voted on their rights. Peace and life emerged as the most valued rights. Inspired by the children's exercise, adults organized their own Mandate for Peace, Life and Liberty in 1997, and with 10 million votes, expressed their rejection of the use of force by guerrilla, paramilitary and national armed forces. As a long-term strategy, the voice of children was considered fundamental in promoting their right to participate in nation-building.

11. The country programme also evolved to include policy mobilization for children and women as well as leveraging of local resources. The office continues to support the fulfilment of the NPA goals and to ensure their sustainability. Policy breakthroughs have been achieved on micronutrients, water and sanitation, family welfare and maternal mortality reduction. Pilot experiences ready for expansion exist in education and child labour. Progress is also being made on the harmonization of the Children's Code with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

12. Collaboration, convergence and complementarily are being pursued among the United Nations agencies. Notably UNICEF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Migrations Organization and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have been collaborating on issues related to internally displaced populations. Likewise, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and UNICEF collaborate on HIV/AIDS prevention, reproductive health and maternal mortality. As Colombia is one of the pilot countries of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), a Common Country Assessment (CCA) has been completed, and in 1999, UNDAF will be prepared, thus providing the framework for the development of the next full country programme of cooperation.

13. On 25 January 1999, a violent earthquake shook the coffee-growing region of Colombia, which resulted in over 1,000 dead and close to 5,000 injured. Some 250,000 persons lost their homes and 80 per cent of the schools were destroyed, leaving 120,000 children without schools.

14. The UNICEF response was made possible mainly through generous contributions from National Committees for UNICEF. The most urgent needs of children and their families in the post-trauma phase were addressed, and some support was provided for the reconstruction phase of the emergency. Various interventions were implemented,

including: support for the provision of temporary latrines, safe water, oral rehydration salts and medicines to prevent diarrhoeal diseases; material support to the rehabilitation of severely affected families; technical assistance in community organization; and the creation of employment opportunities and support for the re-establishment of school activities, including for disabled children. Some 10,000 education kits were distributed, and model earthquake resistant schools are being built using a locally grown bamboo. UNICEF has also provided support in responding to the psychosocial needs of thousands of children and their families. Collaborating with government agencies, and with food support from the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF undertook capacity-building activities for the psychosocial rehabilitation of traumatized children. This process was facilitated by 30 adolescents from the Children's Peace Movement who have used this methodology effectively in conflict areas.

Lessons learned

15. During 1998-1999, it was determined that the country programme should focus more on policy and mobilization for children and women and comprise three interrelated programme components. The experiences from the local development programme influence public policy. Local development includes a social communication and mobilization component that provides valuable experiences for the national mobilization programme. At the same time, the public policy and communication programmes influence and orient the local development programme. All the programmes mobilize the private and public sectors.

16. The use of a rights-based approach has facilitated coordination and the inter-institutional commitment to developing programmes oriented towards increasing the provision and improving the quality of services at the local level. The evolution from basic services interventions to local development projects that include social management, communication and mobilization has provided an opportunity to sensitize leaders from institutions and civil society about investing in children and women as fundamental for human development.

17. Another lesson learned was that massive citizen mobilization around deeply felt issues was an effective way of informing about children's rights. The Colombian people have gained a better understanding of children's rights through the social mobilization process with the Children's Peace Movement and the Citizen's Mandate for Peace, supported by UNICEF. Although in its nascent stage, it is interesting to note that the UNICEF experience of introducing child rights concepts to public and government officials through the academic sector has shown promising results.

18. An aggressive fund-raising plan, relying on programmatic content where the impact is measurable and visible to the private sector and civil society as a whole, has permitted sustainable growth in corporate alliances to support financing of the country programme.

Recommended programme cooperation, 2000–2001

Estimated annual expenditure

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	2000	*2001*	*Total*
General resources			
Public policies	300	300	600
Local development	283	283	566
Communication and social mobilization	250	250	500
Subtotal	**833**	**833**	**1 666**
Supplementary funds			
Public policies	375 000	375 000	750 000
Local development	1 025 000	1 025 000	2 050 000
Communication and social mobilization	600 000	600 000	1 200 000
Subtotal	**2 000 000**	**2 000 000**	**4 000 000**
Total	**2 000 833**	**2 000 833**	**4 001 666**

Programme preparation process

19. This short-term duration country programme was prepared as a continuation of the country programme currently being implemented, emphasizing those aspects which need to be strengthened and identifying arising problems affecting Colombian children. The proposed programme was discussed and approved by the Colombian International Cooperation Agency and National Planning Department institutions. These two entities are the key national counterparts of the State of Colombia for the international cooperation agencies. Other United Nations organizations and the main national counterparts were also involved in the process. This programme will lead to the full harmonization of the programme cycles of UNDP, UNFPA, WFP and UNICEF as of the year 2002.

Programme objectives and strategies

20. The main goals of the 2000–2001 programme of cooperation are: to continue building on its previous successes towards greater awareness in Colombian civil society, the State and the Government of the situation of children and women; to foster increased involvement in seeking solutions that will ensure children's full exercise of citizenship; and to encourage participation and self-expression, especially in families and schools. The programme will continue to pursue advocacy and assist central and local governments, civil society and those involved in the armed conflict to respect children's rights. It will also continue to provide support for local-level planning, development, monitoring, integration or rehabilitation of displaced and vulnerable populations in selected marginalized urban areas and in rural indigenous and Afro-Colombian regions.

21. The main programme strategies will continue to focus on providing support to improve the family environment for children and to enhance access to knowledge, skills and basic social services. Partnerships with select members of civil society, key universities, the private sector, religious organizations and the media will be further strengthened. Resources will continue to be leveraged for children among government counterparts, the private sector, civil society and international development partners. The proposed country programme will continue with its closely interlinked programmes in line with the existing structure: public policies for children and women; local development; and communication and social mobilization.

Public policies

22. This programme will continue to translate local development experiences into strategies and policies for wider replication and expansion. It will maintain the reorientation of current social, economic and fiscal policies to better match services to the real needs of the poorest and most vulnerable children, adolescents and women. The programme's main activities include support to: networks for monitoring, evaluation and updating of public policies for children and women; alliances with universities and institutions to generate debates, forums, studies, research and documentation for the enhancement of civil society's public awareness of children's rights; studies on the quantity and quality of the social investment for children and poor families; the eradication of child labour; the protection of street children and children at risk of abuse; micronutrient initiatives; an early warning system on internally displaced populations; reform of the Children's Code; reducing maternal mortality and improving reproductive health; early childhood care and the quality of basic education; the registration of children; quality assurance to strengthen services for children; reporting on progress at end-decade on achieving children's goals; United Nations reform; and vulnerability analysis for disaster mitigation.

Local development

23. This programme will continue to pursue the development of models to empower families, communities and local governments in sustainable development through children's and women's rights. It will continue to cooperate in seven marginalized neighbourhoods of Santafé de Bogota, Medellin and Bello; 33 indigenous and Afro-Colombian municipalities of Cauca, Nariño, Choco, Guajira, Caqueta and Amazonia which are the poorest and most excluded areas of the country; and areas affected by emergencies or involved in armed conflict with displaced populations such as Putumayo and Uraba. It will continue to expand basic services at the local level, within the framework of the government's policy of decentralization and institutional capacity-building. Strategies include the institutional strengthening of local management capacity, and the promotion of community participation and partnerships in the planning of local development. Activities include training in local planning and management of affordable basic services, including water and sanitation, education adapted to ethnic minorities, support to enhancement of the quality of basic education, preventive health, child abuse prevention networks, support to youth and women's

associations, and income-generation projects. The safe motherhood strategy will be developed at the municipal level, emphasizing the prevention and early attention to teenage pregnancy to reduce MMR.

24. UNICEF, jointly with other United Nations agencies, will maintain its offer to the Government to provide humanitarian and basic services to children in areas occupied by the guerrilla and paramilitary armed groups, emulating experiences with "peace corridors" elsewhere.

Communication and social mobilization

25. This programme will continue efforts to place children's and women's rights, especially sexual and reproductive rights to decrease MMR and enhance gender equity, and the right of children to express themselves and participate in nation-building on the agenda of national opinion makers. It will also support communication for specific projects in support of children's rights and goals as well as fund-raising for children.

26. It will continue to develop existing activities, including: advocacy for children's rights and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; support to the Children's Peace Movement and the Civil Society's Peace Mandate; the prevention of accidents caused by land-mines; communication support to specific public policies and local development activities; the psychosocial rehabilitation of children victimized by armed conflict or natural disasters; and the reduction of child abuse and child labour. In addition, the programme will consolidate partnerships with the press and media to ensure that the voices of children form part of public opinion.

Programme management

27. An intersectoral team headed by the new Colombian Agency for International Cooperation will coordinate the country programme, sharing an oversight function that will include direct field visit whenever appropriate.

28. To improve the efficiency and effectiveness necessary for management excellence, the country office will prepare annual management plans that will incorporate the streamlining of workflows, and utilize quality assurance indicators and periodical participatory reviews to comply with country programme management plans. Staff morale, in-house staff training and the rationalization of staff turnover will be key managerial concerns.

29. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the office will ensure that all objectives have proper indicators. It will conduct three programme monitoring and evaluation exercises each year, two internal and one involving counterparts and allies, including relevant locally-based embassies.

30. Close collaboration with the United Nations, bilateral agencies and NGOs will be pursued. Inter-agency programmatic links will be strengthened through participation in United Nations thematic groups and other such working groups. UNICEF will work closely with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNFPA and PAHO in helping the Government to meet the NPA goals. With the completion of the CCA in 1999 and the preparation of UNDAF, convergence and collaboration among United Nations agencies will be pursued with human rights as the basic platform. Inter-agency proposals are being developed with UNFPA and PAHO to strengthen aspects of reproductive health and reduce MMR, and with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNDP and the UNHCR to promote human rights.

31. Fund-raising from the private sector will focus on maintaining current donors, expanding corporate alliances, increasing sales of cards and products, and exploring willingness and funds availability from international financial institutions. Leveraging resources from the Government and other counterparts will help to ensure the sustainability of programme cooperation achievements.

TABLE

COUNTRY : COLOMBIA
PROGRAME : 2000-2001

LINKAGE OF PROGRAMME BUDGET AND STAFFING/STAFF COSTS

PROGRAMME SECTION/AREAS AND FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAMME BUDGET				POSTS a/										STAFF COSTS b/		
	GR	FSF	NSF	TOTAL	D2/L7	D1/L6	P/L5	P/L4	P/L3	P/L2	IP	NP	GS	TOTAL	IP	LOCAL	TOTAL
GENERAL RESOURCES :																	
COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MOBILIZAT	500,000			500,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	232,798	232,798
PUBLIC POLICIES	600,000			600,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	0	278,372	278,372
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT	566,000			566,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	304,731	304,731
TOTAL GR	1,666,000			1,666,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	7	10	0	815,901	815,901
SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING :																	
COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MOBILIZAT		0	1,200,000	1,200,000	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	3	241,700	157,635	399,335
PUBLIC POLICIES		0	750,000	750,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT		0	2,050,000	2,050,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL SF		0	4,000,000	4,000,000	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	3	241,700	157,635	399,335
TOTAL GR & SF	1,666,000	0	4,000,000	5,666,000	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	8	13	241,700	973,536	1,215,236
SUPPORT BUDGET			Operating costs	458,800													
			Staffing		0	0	1	1	0	0	2	4	9	15	507,778	1,067,163	1,574,941
GRAND TOTAL (GR + SF + SB)					0	0	1	2	0	0	3	8	17	28	749,478	2,040,699	2,790,177
Number of posts and staff costs:																	
Current programme cycle											3	8	17	28			
At the end of proposed programme cycle (indicative only)											3	8	17	28	749,478	2,040,699	2,790,177

GR = general resources.
SF = supplementary funding.
FSF = funded supplementary funding.
NSF = new supplementary funding.
IP = international Professional.
NP = national Professional.
GS = General Service.
SB = support budget.

a/ Each post, regardless of its funding source, supports the country programme as a whole.
b/ Excludes temporary assistance and overtime.